

REMARKSSpecification

Applicant has corrected the specification to conform to the Examiner's requested changes. A marked-up version of the specification is attached hereto.

Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's claimed invention is deserving of patent protection because it describes, in combination, a useful and functional device which patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art. In conclusion, Applicant respectfully submits that this Amendment, in view of the Remarks offered herein, is fully responsive to all aspects of the objections tendered by the Examiner in the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment. Applicant respectfully submits that he has persuasively demonstrated that the above-identified Patent Application is in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited. Please call the undersigned if you have any questions.

If there are any fees incurred by this Amendment Letter, please deduct them from our Deposit Account No. 23-0830.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADEIn the specification:

Paragraph beginning at line 23 of Page 8 has been amended as follows:

In the preferred embodiment, the sleeve 12 comprises a mesh-like configuration defining a plurality of apertures 20 so that the bait 18 can be seen and smelled [smelt] by a fish (not shown) while the bait 18 is retained in the sleeve 12, although it should be clearly understood that substantial benefit could be derived from an alternative configuration of the expandable bait sleeve 10 in which the sleeve 12 is solid without apertures 20.

Paragraph beginning at line 4 of Page 10 has been amended as follows:

Referring now to Figures 3 and 3A, an alternative embodiment of the expandable bait sleeve 10, hereinafter 100, is shown. The expandable bait sleeve 100 (shown in Figure 3) is essentially the same as the expandable bait sleeve 10, although the expandable bait sleeve 100 comprises a swivel harness 132. For this reason, the same reference numbers used in describing the features of the expandable bait sleeve 10 of the preferred embodiment will be used when describing the identical features of the expandable bait sleeve 100. The swivel harness 132 has a first end 134 and

a second end 136. The first end 134 of the swivel harness 132 is dimensioned to swivel and is coupled to an outer surface of the second end 16 of the sleeve 12 (shown in Figure 3) and is dimensioned to be coupled to a fishing line 22. The second end 136 of the swivel harness 132 is coupled to an outer surface [inner surface] of the second end 16 of the sleeve 12 and is dimensioned to be coupled to a leader 138. The expandable bait sleeve 100 further comprises a leader 138 having a first end 140 and a second end 142 (shown in Figure 3). The first end 140 is coupled to the second end 136 of the swivel harness 132.

Paragraph beginning at line 5 of Page 13 has been amended as follows:

Referring now to Figure 7, an alternative embodiment of the expandable bait sleeve 10, hereinafter 400, is shown. The expandable bait sleeve 400 is essentially the same as the expandable bait sleeve 10, although the sleeve 412 [sleeve 12] is molded into a soft bait 418. For this reason, the same reference numbers used in describing the features of the expandable bait sleeve 10 of the preferred embodiment will be used when describing the identical features of the expandable bait sleeve 400. The sleeve 412 [sleeve 12] of the expandable bait sleeve 400 is comprised of a mesh-like configuration defining a plurality of apertures 20. The sleeve 412 [sleeve 12] is placed in a mold used for creating soft artificial bait 418. Then plastisol is injected into the mold so as to create a soft

artificial bait with a sleeve as a skeleton. The sleeve 412 portion of the new combined sleeve 412/soft artificial bait 418 can then be coupled to a fishing hook 26. The fishing hook 26 can then be coupled to a fishing line 22 proximate a second end 16 of the sleeve 412. Although, in the preferred embodiment of the expandable bait sleeve 400, plastisol is injected into the mold for soft artificial bait 418, it should be clearly understood that substantial benefit could be derived from an alternative configuration of the expandable bait sleeve 400 in which a material other than plastisol is used so long as it imparts to the bait 418 the same qualities of flexibility and stretchability.

Paragraph beginning at line 7 of Page 18 has been amended as follows:

Referring now to Figure 11, an alternative embodiment of the expandable sleeve 10, hereinafter 800, is shown. The expandable bait sleeve 800 is essentially the same the expandable bait sleeve 600, although the sleeve 12 is coupled to a bucktail spinner. The expandable bait sleeve 800 comprises a harness 832. The expandable bait sleeve further comprises a first fishing hook 826 having a first end 828, a second end 830 and a center portion 829 therebetween. The first end 828 of the first fishing hook 826 is molded to the harness 832 and the center portion 829 of the first fishing hook 826 is coupled to the second end 16 of the sleeve 12. The second end 830 of the first fishing hook 826

comprises at least one hook. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises a skirt 870 having a narrow portion 872 and a wide portion 874. Preferably, the skirt 870 is comprised of the hair of a deer, although it should be clearly understood that substantial benefit could be derived from an alternative configuration of the expandable bait sleeve 800 in which a material other than deer hair is used for the skirt 870. The narrow portion 872 of the skirt 870 is coupled to the harness 832 and the wide portion 874 is dimensioned to cover at least a portion of the sleeve 12 and the first fishing hook 826. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises a wire 838 having a first end 840 and a second end 842. The first end of the wire 838 is coupled to the second end 16 of the sleeve 12. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises a second fishing hook 846 having a wire coupling end 848 and a hook end 849. The wire coupling end 848 is dimensioned to be coupled to the second end 842 of the wire 838 and the hook end 849 protrudes outside of the first end 14 of the sleeve 12. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises a head 850 having a front portion 852 and a rear portion 854. The rear portion 854 is coupled to the harness 832. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises a shaft 876 [shaft 870] having a first end 878 [first end 872] and a second end 879 [second end 874]. The second end 879 [second end 874] of the shaft 876 [shaft 870] is coupled to the front portion 852 of the head 850 and the first end 878 [first end 872] of the shaft 876 [shaft 870] is dimensioned to be coupled to a fishing line 22. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises at

least one spinner blade 880 coupled to the shaft 876 [shaft 870]. The expandable bait sleeve 800 further comprises at least one bead 890 coupled to the shaft 876 [shaft 870]. The expandable bait sleeve 800 incorporates the sleeve 12 into what is known in the art as a buck tail spinner.

Line 1 of Abstract has been amended as follows:

An [A] expandable bait sleeve and method therefor capable of expanding in order to securely retain baits of various sizes and dimensioned to be coupled to various types of fishing lures and fishing hooks in order to improve a fisherman's chances of catching a fish by minimizing the chance that a fish will be able to "steal" the bait without being caught on the hook.